

S/N 10/550118

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 4,429,262 (Utenick). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 1 is directed to an ultrasonic probe comprising an encoder correction ROM that stores a previously measured swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer with respect to each count value obtained by counting pulses from the rotary encoder, and outputs the previously measured and stored swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer.

Utenick does not disclose the above features of claim 1. Utenick indicates that the counters 112 detect the actual position (column 6, line 42). The actual position is a position that is calculated, e.g., by a linear function using the count values of the counters 112. Utenick does not consider that the count values of the counter 112 and the swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer may deviate from the relationship of the linear function due to backlash or the like. Thus, Utenick does not disclose or suggest forming an ultrasonic image by outputting the previously measured swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer with respect to each of the count values of the counters 112. Therefore, Utenick does not teach or suggest every element of claim 1 and claim 1 is not anticipated by Utenick. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 2 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependence on independent claim 1. The rejection of this claim should be withdrawn. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection.

Obviousness Rejections

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over UK Patent GB 2216660 (Yamamoto et al.) in view of US Patent 4,429,262 (Utenick) and US Patent 5,159,931 (Pini). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

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Utenick is cited in this rejection for reasons similar to those in the rejection discussed above. Thus, claims 1, 3 and 5 are allowable for at least the same reasons as the argument above. Utenick does not contain the feature of an encoder correction ROM that stores a previously measured swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer with respect to each count value obtained by counting pulses from the rotary encoder, and outputs the previously measured and stored swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer. Therefore, it is not possible to combine Utenick with Yamamoto and Pini to obtain the features of claims 1, 3 and 5. The rejections of these claims should be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 4 and 6 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence on independent claims 1, 3 and 5, respectively. The rejections of these claims should be withdrawn. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejections.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

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Respectfully submitted,

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